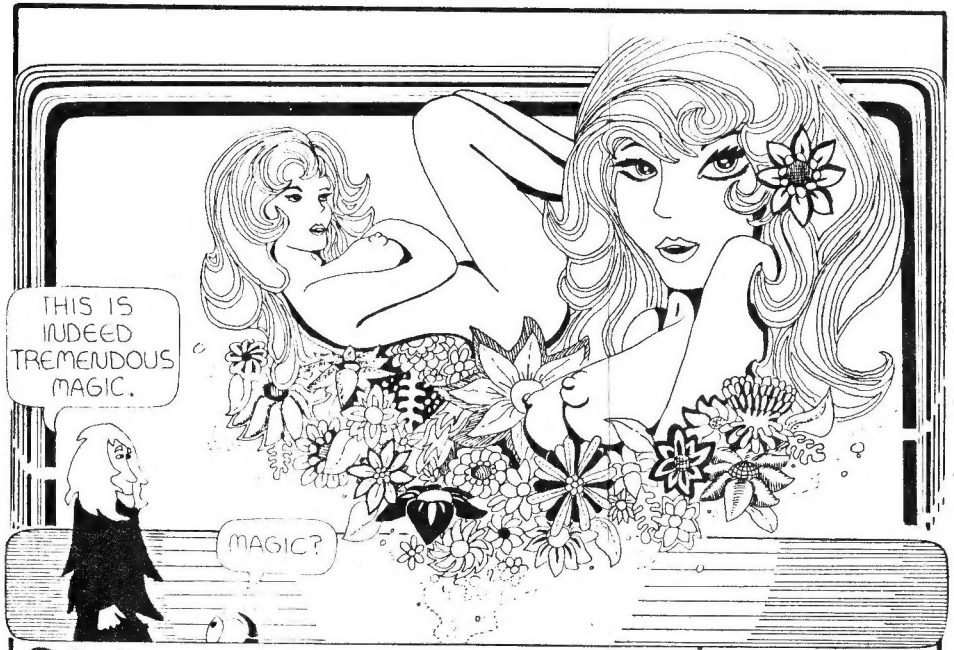

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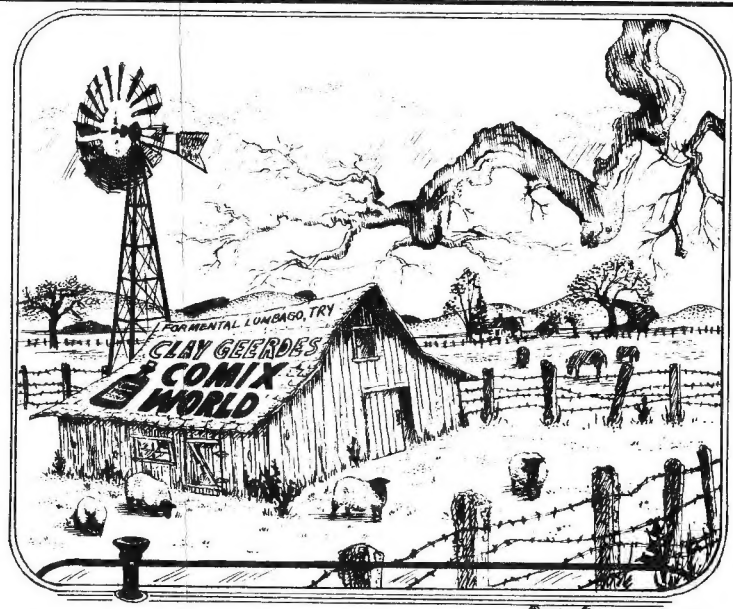

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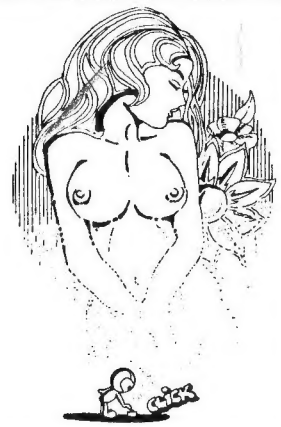
A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR OF AUSTIN STONE: "Thanks a lot for the review of Austin Stone 2. I've been getting orders for books from all over North America, Canada, California, New York, Kentucky, Ill. It's great. A real boost of energy to get letters from people who say how much they enjoyed A. Stone and how they read about it in COMIX WORLD. Hurrah for COMIX WORLD! Your #50 with the interview was most interesting. Your comments on being interested in other things besides comix was good. In a world as cloistered as ugs, a breath of other arts is vital. If comix are to grow at all, and it's the growth I'm committed to, then it must come from comic artists giving themselves the credit for being artists rather than just "freaks" pushing the old party lines, and from those artists interesting themselves in other art forms; theater, film, literature, etc. We have left the 60s & the hippie revolution is drawing itself back into the artist from whence it originally came. The death of art & of an artist comes when roles & social values dictate his own mental censorship of the art. I see no limit to the potential of comics for expressing and dealing with the same problems that confronted Dali, Jung, Brecht, Joyce, Shakespeare, Cocteau; any of them . . .There are bound to be limitations, of course, but I dont think they've really been approached or discovered fully. I'm not interested in Star Trek or 80% of the sci-fi around. Utopian hippies have never been done right. Pseudo mythology only obscures the beauty of true mythology, Harold Hedd will give up dope and become an alcoholic. Come on, let's get on with it and get down to the issues. Comics need to investigate, to probe, to discover, to illuminate; just as does any art form. . . An excuse is always easy to find. Constipation is more subversive than we might suspect. Entertainment is too often an excuse for bad art." 7-17-76 -Henry R. Hubben, Bx 13204, Austin, Tx 78711.

Arizona Daily Wildcat

Will Estren's errors ever be corrected? He was used as Maurice Horn's World Encyclo-Pedia of the Comics source, a fat book loaded with more errors that will never be corrected. An error in hardback equals history



"History of the Underground Comics" sets its sights higher, and grates on the aware reader's sensibilities in an excruciating manner. From the bogus pretensions of the opening chapter (Estren attributes McLuhanesque qualities to what is little more than a sophomoric thesis arbitrarily studded with shock-value illustrations connected tenuously at best to the text) to the shoddily-reproduced EC horror classic in the appendix, "History" resembles nothing so much as a magazine article pumped up to book length by belaboring and reiterating each bush-league point. Whatever outlook Estren thought he had dissolves in a swamp of self-cannibalizing cross-references that melt each chapter down to the same hackneyed retread.

ESTREN ATTEMPTS to isolate the underground comics from the evolution of cartooning of which they are but a current, albeit vital facet, viewing them as some sort of sociological phenomenon involving a movement of near-religious artistic visionaries disdaining the commercial world for a lofty, unified ideal. His superficial exploration of sources and influences and obvious factual errors belie his self-professed status as a "comic-book freak." The touted cooperation of the cartoonists themselves seems to consist of no more than having them fill out questionnaires, a device that vents petty self-indulgence on the part of minor talents which Estren's lack of knowledgability of his material inflates to ugly proportions.

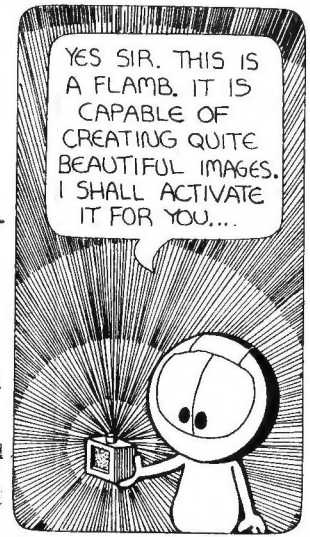
The underground comics constitute a fascinating, successful effort by the artists themselves to forge a medium to present their eccentric, highly varied talents on their own terms. Their continued existence, in de facto defiance of the tenets of much commercial cartooning, is less the revelation Estren myopically perceives than a marketing triumph firmly entrenched in the continuum of people who want to see something drawn eventually linking up with someone who wants nothing so much as to draw it.

Despite his moronic polarization of under- and overground and heavy-handed self-consciousness, Estren is simply not a part of what he anxiously pretends fluency in. The comics, with personal visions depicted with abilities ranging from brilliant universality to hack mediocrity, deserve far better than the mind-dulling, disjointed dabbling they receive at the hands of "History of the Underground Comics." —Charles G. Oldham

People keep on drawing comic stories. Takes time to do a solo book, but for many it's more rewarding in the end than cranking out supermachoism. It took Brad Foster 14 months to complete JABBERWOCKY. Inspired by Wonderland, it's 24 pages, 8½x11", B/W on 60lb stock. No ads. $1.25 pp from Brad, 202 Oakleaf, San Antonio, Tx 78209. Lead story is "Beware of Venusians Bearing Gifts" and it's about a very unusual extra-terrestial named Hector. This is one collectors of unique comic art will want to have. * * *

Will Bob Vojtko escape the supermarket world and become a big-time cartoonist? It's very likely. What he's going through these days reminds me of Bill Mauldin's early career (See Bill's autobiography The Brass Ring--required reading for all new cartoonists!); all those submissions and rejections, but Bob's beginning to hit regularly. Anderson Features, 3798 Trophy Place, Lizella, Georgia 31052, a strip syndicate, is handling a single panel shot by Bob called Coupons. His Fishtales ran in Cobblestone's Uncle Jam comic section. He sells the collection of Fishtale strips for a dime and a 13¢ stamp. His address is 2541 Jackson St., Lorain, Ohio 44052. If you're doing strips or panels, you might want to contact Pat Anderson at the Georgia address above. Phone 912/935-2440. * * *

In Vampirella 54, a new story by Jan Strnad with illos by Rich Corben. Strnad was the editor of Anomaly. He wrote many of Corben's best scripts. "Bowser" is in color.



COMING STUFF: SLOW DEATH 7 from Last Gasp, Arcade 7 from The Print Mint, & Comix Book 5 from Krupp.* I'd like to hear from some readers on those women's sex comix, WET SATIN & TITS & CLITS 2. I'll run some of the best comments in a special section in CW. * Congrats to Hunt Emerson, Paul Fisher, & the guys who got together England's 4th of July Konvention of Alternative Komix. Con book was superior to many ugs. Info from Arts Lab Press, Tower St. Birmingham 19, England. Attn: Hunt Emerson, author of the recent ZOMIX COMIX. * Marvel's MONARK STARSTALKER is a cross between Jonah Hex and Clint Eastwood. An outer-space bounty hunter. Tale by Howie Chaykin. Beats hell out of 2001. Tired stuff that. * * The last word on Frankenstein: In Search of Frankenstein by Radu Florescu tells it all. Readable research, nicely illustrated. Warner Books. $1.95. P.O. Box 690, New York. N. Y. 10019. * In case you think your brain still belongs to you, check out a copy of Wilson Bryan Key's Subliminal Seduction (1973). It'll fill you in on what's been happening since The Hidden Persuaders (1955) and may even have an effect on your comic reading habits.* Tell your friends to subscribe to COMIX WORLD. Spread the word around. 8/76 C. G.

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